

## **Some Primary Goals for South Kitsap School District**

In order of importance for me for and what I expect for our Schools in South Kitsap is: ***Academic Excellence, Transparency and Trust, Financial Accountability, Racial and Ethnic Equality, What Parents & Students Want, and Equity in Education for all Students.***



Despite strong community financial support, the district has low test scores and academic standing. SKSD is not among the top 80 rated by OSPI. Many SKSD graduates enter advanced learning institutions performing at “99” level in math and English. 20% of child population in SK are not attending SKSD schools. 2 out of 15 kids in my community attend SK schools, the remainder are home schooled. The District has lost its focus, it is not fostering or producing academic excellence. SKSD has few offers little CTE offerings.



The District’s continued failure to pass school bonds are evidence of community mistrust. Many in community do not feel the District practices transparency.



There are 22 directors and assistant directors in the District Average pay is \$150K in salary and benefits. These numbers do not move the test score needle up. There is not enough feedback to parents regarding student progress. Goals are not clearly articulated by the District. The district points to recent audits to demonstrate financial solvency. These audits are too focused to provide the larger picture of where taxpayer money is being spent and how those expenditures equate to student progress. District costs for specific programs are not adequately tracked. The District is unable to tell voters how much specific programs cost.

The district received approximately \$24 M in McCreary funding. They spent almost all of it on pay raises for all district employees. Their payroll went from \$89 M to \$108 M out of a \$147 M budget. Since many union contracts have yearly 3%- 5% pay raises in them, it will cost the district \$5.4 M in increased payroll costs this year. The next year will be \$5.7 M in additional payroll costs. The next year will be \$6.0 M and so forth. This will continue on forever. This does not include any additional hiring by the district and does not include any additional costs due to the state implementing its new insurance program- the SEBB; which will now cover almost every employee. The district has agreed to pay the lion's share of this cost for its employees so an additional cost of \$700K to \$1.1M a year needs to be added to the above figures. The personnel director says they "pay the best; to get the best". This is true as the salaries in the district are well above other districts and the benefits package (averaging \$21K per employee) are second to none. So, if we hire the best, why are we not the best academically? Isn't that what the voters are paying for?

Academic excellence for all students is the mission of any school district-period. First, all personnel and many programs need to be reviewed to see if they are directly supporting the mission of academic excellence. Those which don't support academic excellence for all students need to be cut and the money moved to programs which support academic excellence. Once the district has restored academic excellence, then other programs need to be funded. Obviously, sports are a cornerstone of our schools, but sports that very few participate in but are extremely costly need to be terminated. The high school has 61 clubs all looking for money. Self-supporting needs to be the rule versus asking the taxpayer

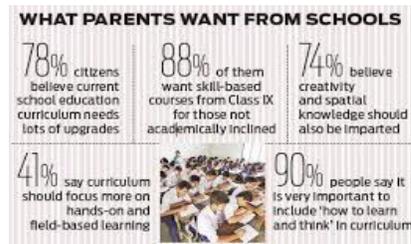
to fund any idea that comes along. But academics first and foremost. Second, the district needs to implement “metrics” in all areas. Metrics are how businesses measure success and allows them to focus on their main objectives and problem issues. The easy example is personal budgeting. If you have trouble budgeting your money correctly, what do experts tell you to do to solve the problem? They tell you to track (measure and monitor) your spending for a month or so and find the “leaks”. This usually solves even the biggest budgeting problems. The district needs to implement metrics for both achieving academic excellence and for cost control. You can’t fix what you don’t measure. Every successful business in the world does this and it works. The company “Apple” would be an example of how well this technique works. Since the goal is academic excellence for ALL students, all student need access to the same programs at their level and at their school. If the IB and Spanish Immersion programs are so great, why are they not at all schools to give all students the opportunity? Answer- because they are so expensive which is why other school districts did not implement them. Other districts prefer to spend their money on the majority of student needs, not just a certain segment. And, why Spanish Immersion? Isn’t this region heavily Asian which is who our student professional will work with in the future?

No one can assure the safety of students at school. While the district is focused on building security and security systems, they forget that the students are vulnerable when grouped together during fire drills, recess for elementary schools, sports teams are on fields with cars able to drive right up to the practice field, and waiting for school busses and sitting on school busses waiting for all of them to leave at one time. We seem to think the criminal mind is set on getting in the building to cause disaster. If so, then why are cafeteria doors open in the back of all schools most of the time, why is the south entrance to the SKHS not blocked off full time, why are badges not worn at all times by all personnel, and why are “maintenance” vehicles allowed unannounced on playgrounds and in the back of schools at any time. If the district is serious about student safety, then they need to learn to live with the inconvenience of passes, pre- announcement, and all administrators out watching for problem issues when kids are outside the building instead of in the office conducting business. With many of our schools surrounded by woods, it is paramount that administrators are on playgrounds, watching activity around busses, fire drills, etc to watch the woods and cars; not inside or just talking and watching the kids. More video cameras for all schools should be a very high priority. And, no reason the PO Police department and Kitsap County Sheriffs can’t be around the schools when busses arrive and depart. With the PO Police

less than 2 minutes from the high school, they can be in the area during routine fire drills when 2200 kids are out in the open.

True equality means holding everyone accountable in the same way, regardless of race, gender, faith, ethnicity - or political ideology.

Is racial inequality is an issue at the SKSD? If so, this is the responsibility of every teacher, administrator, principal, district staff, and the Superintendent. If a school is tolerating racial inequality, why are the people involved still employed? Since this is federal law and now a cornerstone of our society, unions need to understand that employees who are contributing to such an issue are terminated- period. No tolerance for this is acceptable at any level. If a Principal needs help to solve the issue, the district is full of people who are highly paid to help as well as the Superintendent. The Superintendent should always be informed of any issue of this type and if not taking immediate action, they should be terminated- period.



How about asking the student and the parents what they want. What is their choice of a career profession and then the district staff maps out how to get each student there? The money comes from programs not supporting the primary objective- Academic excellence so a student can pursue their desired profession. If not offered at the high school, find who does and find a way to help the student get there. If cheaper, bring the program to the high school. We can't offer everything but we can offer what most students' want- shipyard, automotive, craft trades, etc. Instead of cutting them when money is tight, how about reducing redundant staff and district staff and using that money to fund the programs versus asking the taxpayer for more money. How about contracting out many of the things that maintenance does (lawn mowing, plumbing issues, etc) versus adding more expensive people to the district payroll.

## **Pathways to Equity in Education for All Students**

Again, another question that implies that the district does not provide an education for all students. What is the district staff for? It is their job to work with community officials and then with the principals of the schools to ensure that each student in our district is offered a superb education. If the SKSD is not providing this, what is the Superintendent doing as well as their staff? What are all these directors, assistant directors, and others doing if it is not providing the needed services to all students? Why do we tolerate people not doing their job if this is a problem in the SKSD?